

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 L-03 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9025
INFO AMCONSUL KADUNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 7583

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PDEV, NI, SHUM
SUBJECT: AZIKIWE AND CLUB 19

REF: (A) LAGOS 7365, (B) LAGOS 7306, (C) LAGOS 7183,
(D) LAGOS 3450

1. IN COMMENTS TO THE PRESS IN THE CONTEXT OF
HEAD OF STATE OBASANJO'S VISIT TO ANAMBRA STATE,
DR. NNAMDI AZIKIWE, THE FIRST PRESIDENT OF
NIGERIA, HELD OPEN THE POSSIBILITY OF HIS RETURN
TO POLITICS AND WAS COY ABOUT HIS RELATIONSHIP
WITH CLUB 19. ACCORDING TO THE DAILY TIMES (DT),
AZIKIWE, WHO "LOOKED STRONG AND FULL OF LIFE,"
SAID, "WHEN THE BAN ON POLITICS IS LIFTED, THE
NATION WILL HEAR FROM ME."

2. ON HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH CLUB 19, AZIKIWE
DENIED THAT HE HAD SHOWN INTEREST IN THE CLUB OR
HAD ATTEMPTED TO MAKE ANY CONTACT WITH IT. HOWEVER,
ACCORDING TO THE DT ACCOUNT, AZIKIWE, "BEAMING
WITH SMILES," SAID CLUB 19 COULD BE AN ATTEMPT
TO BRING TOGETHER THE 19 STATES OF THE FEDERATION.

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3. COMMENT: WE WILL NOT KNOW THE OUTCOME OF
THE POLITICAL MINUET BETWEEN CLUB 19 AND AZIKIWE
UNTIL THE BAN ON POLITICS IS FINALLY LIFTED;
HOWEVER, AS WE REPORTED EARLIER, IF A MARRIAGE
COULD BE ARRANGED, IT WOULD SOLVE THE
CLUB'S LEADERSHIP PROBLEM. NEVERTHELESS, IT
MIGHT NOT BE GREETED WITH ENTHUSIASM BY THE

CLUB'S "NEWBREED" POLITICIANS. FOR EXAMPLE,
CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY MEMBER PAUL UNONGO LAST
WEEK LAMENTED TO US ABOUT EFFORTS "TO DRAG POOR
OLD DR. AZIKIWE BACK INTO POLITICS."
WYMAN

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NNN

Message Attributes

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